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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W - JUNE DENNISON, AND AF/RSA - PETER BARLERIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/01/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV AU LY MR UG

SUBJECT: USAU: RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON LOOKING FOR CHAMPION OF PRST ON COUPS IN AFRICA

REF: A. STATE 30234

1B. TRIPOLI 267

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DONALD YAMAMOTO, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) The U.S. Mission to the African Union (USAU) discussed ref A points with African Union PermReps from Burkina-Faso and Uganda. Both reacted very favorably to the suggestion that one or both of their countries propose to the UNSC a UN Presidential Statement (PRST) on coups in Africa. Burkina-Faso's and Uganda's ambassadors said they would make positive recommendations to their respective foreign ministries.

12. (C) "As President of the (AU) Peace and Security Council (for the month of April), I can only encourage you to follow this path," Burkina-Faso's ambassador said. He predicted that fellow Council members would "rejoice" at this initiative by the United States. Uganda's ambassador was no less enthusiastic. "It is a very good proposal," he said. The Ugandan ambassador rejected assertions by Libyan Leader Qadhafi and others that the AU Peace and Security Council was acting too swiftly to impose sanctions on the Mauritanian junta and its supporters. "It is the UN that is not moving fast enough."

13. (C) USAU defers to our Embassies in Kampala, Ouagadougou, and Tripoli, on further approaches to their respective host nations. Also, USAU requests to be kept informed of USUN's discussions with missions in New York so that we can coordinate with the AU.

14. (C) USAU also spoke with the Ethiopian PermRep to the AU, as well as with the Ambassador from Mauritania who continues to represent President Abdallahi in Addis Ababa. They, too, welcomed the USG initiative. The Ethiopian ambassador to the AU deplored the "minority of voices" within the AU (referring to Qadhafi among others) who have labeled the Peace and Security Council a "useless" body." The proposed PRST on coups in Africa could help dissuade those who believe they can overthrow a constitutionally elected government, exchange their military uniforms for civilian ones, and participate in an election, the Ethiopian ambassador added.

15. (C) The Mauritanian ambassador was especially pleased to learn of the U.S. demarche. "At this time, we need a strong message from the international community that the junta is not victorious," he said. Mauritanian "democrats" were upset that the Arab League had invited representatives of the Mauritanian junta to attend the summit in Doha this week, he added. The AU and the international community need to remain vigilant, he continued. "Qadhafi is going everything he can

to make sure sanctions do not happen" and that the June 6 election in Mauritania be presented as a fait accompli. Qadhafi, he fears, may have instructed the AU Commission to stop holding regular international contact group meetings on Mauritania. The last such meeting was hosted by La Francophonie in Paris on February 20.

YAMAMOTO